There are two types of people in this world: those who fake it, and those who live it. There are those who separate their professional life from their personal life. They believe once the tie is undone, they are entitled to partake in morally questionable activities, because it’s no reflection on them professionally. I’ve seen this mentality displayed numerous times throughout college, where education majors would party and make mockeries of themselves for all to see. It is the saddest, most disgraceful insult to not only the profession, but to me as well. That dichotomy does not exist for me. Who I am, what I uphold, and how I conduct myself does not change between my professional self and personal self: they are inseparable. You don’t get a choice to be a role model and then not. When you become a teacher, you are morally binding yourself to higher standards and expectations that must always be upheld, regardless of the situation. But no one holds themselves accountable for their actions anymore; no one does the right thing anymore because it’s the road less traveled: difficult and onerous. Simply put, no one tries anymore. It’s easier to flock with the pack than to stand alone against the world that spits in your face and kicks you in the gut. This type of mentality leaves society just… okay. That’s why it’s important for me to become a teacher, to show everyone that being okay is *not* okay. That attitude is why we are here in the first place, and it *needs* changing. I don’t fake it: I live it.

There’s a triad that exists within us all: mind, body, and soul. The mind is knowledge. It’s where we know what to do, where we question and where we think. Once the mind knows better, it does better, so constantly thriving for knowledge and learning is crucial. The body is physical fitness. It’s essential to have a structured temple where you live and a healthy vehicle to guide knowledge. These two components demand discipline, but the last component, the soul, is almost always neglected. The soul is morality. It’s what connects the mind and body together. It’s the part of the whole system that knows the road is going to be hard, but guides you down it just the same. It’s the faith to rise above the rest even when it means you stand alone. It’s doing what’s right not matter what. My expectations will always be laid out for my students, and it will be very clear to them that success is a conscious choice. Your mindset is what dictates whether you succeed or fail, and it’s hard to help those who can’t help themselves. But leading by example, and living everything that I stand for and putting it all on the line for myself and my students, that’s the difference between faking it and living it, between success and failure.

My moral backbone and views on education come from my life experiences. My mother never let me get away with anything, and always held me accountable for what I said, and always admit when I was wrong. A simple concept: you can’t be right if you’re wrong, and that’s how I live my life today. I grew up with a special needs sibling. I’ve seen the worst of the worst of people who traumatized her daily. I’ve gained a completely different perspective of life from having her in my life. I am more compassionate, more empathetic towards others because I felt what she felt all those times she was ridiculed for being “different.” I became determined to be better than those hecklers and rise above those who bring others down. That determination flourished and grew into the other facets of my being.

Reality is I’m not perfect, but I am real. I know there is no easy fix to the major problems revolving around education, but I am not afraid to stand up for what’s right, no matter what. I have my faults and defects, but I never let that stop me from becoming the strongest version of myself. My ultimate goal is to cultivate students who have autonomy, who have a well-developed minds and use them to do what’s right and do right by others. I stand by my number one conviction: you can’t be right if you’re wrong. No one holds themselves accountable for their actions anymore; no one does the right thing anymore because it’s the road less traveled: difficult and onerous. Simply put, no one tries anymore. It’s easier to flock with the pack than to stand alone against the world that spits in your face and kicks you in the gut. This type of mentality leaves society just… okay. That’s why it’s important for me to become a teacher, to show everyone that being okay is not okay. That attitude is why we are here in the first place, and it needs changing.